

A  
1772  
JOURNAL  
OF THE  
SIEGE

OF THE  
City of P R A G U E,

Wrote by a

Principal Officer to one of his Friends.

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Giving an Account of what happen'd during  
the Siege of that City, from the 13th  
Day of *June* to the 14th of *Sept.* 1742.

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D U B L I N : Printed,  
And Sold by the Booksellers, M D C C X L I I I.

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A

## JOURNAL

OF THE

## Siege of PRAGUE, &amp;c.

OUR Couriers, who after three Months Idleness begin now to set out for *France*, furnish me with an Opportunity which I embrace with singular Pleasure, of giving you an Account of our Situation during the Siege. Nothing gave me so much Trouble, as that of not hearing from you ; the Bombs and Cannon Balls falling into the Houses did not, I assure you, chagreen me as much as this Disappointment ; now Heaven be praised all is over. Every thing here bore an exorbitant Price ; the little  
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fresh Meat we had was sold at four Livres \* per Pound, pickled Pork at three per ditto, Butter at four Livres ten Sols, Bread at one Livre five Sols, an Egg at twelve Sols, and every other Kind of Provision in Proportion. I will not trouble you with the Particulars of the miserable Situation in which I have often been, but shall confine myself to an exact detail of all that passed during the Siege.

On the 13th Day of last *June*, the *Austrian* Army, consisting of 80000 Men, (which very closely pursued our Army) arrived before *Prague*. From their Situation we soon perceived that ours was not so advantageous, and therefore we made choice of another where they could less incommode us.

Provisions came to us in their usual Course till the 8th of *July*; nor was there any want of Forrage. We had yet some little Provision of Beef left, and the Country People brought such Provisions to the City as they had to dispose of §; Couriers were dispatch'd as before by the Help of a numerous Escorte or Guard; but this Day the Enemy stopp'd up all the Avenues, and nothing afterwards could be brought into the City. The Cavalry, who from the latter End of *June* were obliged to forrage at a greater Distance, could no longer procure any but by a strong Hand, and at length could get none without fighting for it,

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\* *A Livre is worth a British Shilling, and consists of twenty Sols.*

§ *By means of a Bridge built on Boats.*



The 26th Day of *July*, we attempted to go a foraging, but had no Success; for of the two Companies of Granadiers of the Regiment of *Navarre*, the one was cut to Pieces, and the other was surrounded by above 3000 Pandours and Hussars, who made them all Prisoners to four, who found means to escape. Our Troops however behaved very well, and the Carabiniers signa-  
lized themselves.

The 29th Marshal *Broglie* attended by almost all the general Officers passed the *Moldaw*, near the Village of *Bobenetsch* at the Head of 4000 Horse and 2500 Foot, to reconnoitre the Body of Troops brought from *Moravia* to Prince *Charles* of *Lorrain*, by General *Festitz*; this General who was apprized of our Passage, posted a Body of the Queen of *Hungary's* Troops that was superior in Number to ours, to attack us at the going out of a Defile where an Engagement ensued, which was sustain'd very briskly, on each Side for some Hours, we beat the Enemy back several Times notwithstanding some small Reinforcements they received; but the Marshal *Broglie* observing a considerable Body of Horse detached by Prince *Charles* of *Lorrain* to General *Festitz*, ordered the Detachment of *French* Troops, who still firmly maintain'd their Ground to retire, and the Marshal having satisfied his Curiosity returned in good Order back to his Camp. But in repassing the Bridge some Officers and Horsemen lost their Lives, by being pushed into the River and drown'd, of which Number was Baron *Tournere*, whose Horse getting entangled in the Cordage of some of the Boats fell into the River, where there was no Possibility of saving him,

him, we kill'd Three-hundred of the Enemy, and took Twenty-five Prisoners ; we lost One hundred and sixty Men including *M. de Travieres* Lieutenant Colonel of Horse, *M. de Louvigny* his Brother, Major of the same Regiment, and *M. de Gramont* who was made Prisoner, and since died of his Wounds.

From this Day forth the Horse shifted for Food as well as they could.

On the 31<sup>st</sup> it was resolved upon to slaughter the Horses, in order to supply the Army with Food.

Now we began to experience all the Horrors of War, every one was in a mortal Consternation ; Provisions were no longer exposed to Sale, and if any could be found 'twas not to be purchased, but at an extravagant Price, and the money failed us : for as there was no Possibility of making us Remittances, it was with Difficulty we could even pay the common Soldiers : There was no manner of likelihood that we could long hold out : The Trumpeters were almost every Day employed in carrying and bringing Proposals from one Party to the other : The Conditions on which the *Austrians* insisted, were too unreasonable to be accepted of, for they required that we should evacuate *Bohemia* without Arms or Baggage, and that we should not bear Arms directly nor indirectly against her *Hungarian Majesty* for four Years after our Return to *France*. These unreasonable Conditions made Marshal *Broglio* more resolute than before ; for he was determined never to accept of any Proposals that  
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could in the least blemish the Honour of the Nation, he therefore concluded to approach nearer to the City, whilst the Enemy daily advanced.

The Marshal *Broglie* ordered our Camp to be palisaded with the utmost Expedition, and altho' this was a vast Undertaking, it was however completely finished in a few Days, he took up his Quarters in a fine Castle seated on the right of our Camp on an Eminence over the *Moldaw*: In the mean Time we wrought Day and Night in fortifying the Ramparts, we even made Redouts and Out-works where they were wanting; in short, nothing was omitted to supply by Art, the Defects of the Situation of the Place, for *Prague* is built rather for a commodious City than for a Place of Strength, being seated in a Bottom that is commanded by several Hills, its Walls consist only of plain Curtains and Bastions, having only a dry Moat, but neither Cover'd-way nor Glacis, which facilitates the attacking of it, and makes its Defence more difficult.

However till the second Day of *August* nothing extraordinary occur'd except some Skirmishes; and then we found ourselves in want of Meat, Forrage, and all Sorts of Provision: the Generals reduced their Table to one fourth of what it had been before, and ordered for the future to have Horse-flesh served to their Tables, and the same to be distributed among the Soldiers for the first Time: They reduced the Horse to Six *per* Company, the reduced Men were made Foot Soldiers, and destined to guard the inner Parts of the City, and their Horses were sent to the Slaughter-house.

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The 3d all the Victualing-houses were shut up, and consequently such as were not Boarders were greatly put to their Shifts for Maintainance.

The 5th M. the Intendant by Proclamation, ordered the Citizens to send all their Horses out of the City in 24 Hours, under pain of confiscation, and 500 Florins Fine, which was executed: they allowed the Archbishop to keep eight, the Pandours took some of the Horses that were sent away, and rifled some of the Noblesse that were retiring from *Prague*.

The 6th, Marshal *Broglie* order'd every Inhabitant to be at his respective home, at nine of the Clock at Night, and order'd the Patrols to fire on any five Persons that should be assembled together, he commanded the Inhabitants to set Lights in their Windows, on hearing any tumult in the Street, but forbid them to look out under pain of being shot; he order'd the City to pay \* 5000 Florins a Day, for fifteen Days, amounting in all to 75000, and he further ordered every Inhabitant to declare what Provisions they had, under the Penalty of a Confiscation of the whole, and a mulct of 500 Florins in Case they made a false return.

The 7th, Money becoming scarce, M. the Intendant, some general Officers, and M. *Parèe*, Register of Provisions, sent their Services of Plate

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\* *A Florin is worth two Livres and a half.*



Plate to the Mint, to be coin'd, and the Citizens were ordered to do the same.

The 8th, Nothing occur'd worth the remarking.

On the 9th, the Enemy began tho' with little Success to cannonade and bombard our Camp from several Batteries which they had rais'd, we return'd their Fire much more briskly, and dismounted nine of their Cannon; this Day above 3000 Cannon Balls were shot, and above 1000 Bombs thrown.

The 10th, A Cannon Ball from our Camp happen'd upon some Flints, and by striking fire, blew up one of the Enemy's Magazines, where they had Powder before the Sun a drying, the effect was so prodigious, that it shook all that part called the little City of *Prague*, tho' it was a long half League from it; by this accident, the *Austrians* lost above 400 Men.

The 13th, Marshal *Broglie* received Advice, that the *French* Army commanded by the Marshal *Maillebois*, was in full march to relieve the City, and to be joined on the Way by the Body of *French* Troops that were in *Bavaria*, under the Command of Count *Maurice* of *Saxony*, and the Duke of *Harcourt*, an account of which was given immediately to the general Officers, and to the whole Army, to their unspeakable Joy and Satisfaction. The Enemy who had as early an account as we had of this approaching Succour, which consisted of 60000 Men, drew nearer the  
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City, that they might batter it more effectually, and open their Trenches.

The 14th, our horse re-enter'd into the city.

The 15th, Marshal *Broglie* quitted his Quarters, blew up the Castle, wherein he lodged, and where the Brigade of *Piedmont* was encamped, and took up his former Lodging in the City.

The 17th, The Enemy open'd their Trenches, and wrought with incredible Diligence, notwithstanding the continual fire of our Artillery.

The Night, between the 18th and 19th, We made a Sally with about 5000 Men, we marched directly to attack the Enemy in their Entrenchments, we receiv'd with inconsiderable loss their fire of about 25000 Musket Shot; but when they found us resolutely going on, they abandon'd their Trenches and ran away whilst we pursued them, and with our Bayonets screwed on our Muskets, killed 1500 of them, and made above 400 Prisoners. The attack began betwixt two and three in the Morning, and ended at five and a half, the Enemy left us a compleat Victory, with the loss on our side of about 100 Men, including Officers. Every one behaved well, especially the *Bavarian* Granadiers who treated without mercy all the Pandours that happen'd in their way, of whom above 300 were cut to Pieces, but such of the *Austrians* as surrender'd, had good Quarters given them, we nailed seven Pieces of Cannon and seven Mortars, levell'd the most part of their Trenches, and carry'd off two Pieces of Cannon.

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From the 20th, to the 22d, The Enemy fired only with ten Mortars, and a few Pieces of Cannon.

The 22d, we sallied with about 10000 Men, as well of Horse and Carabiniers, as of Grenadiers and Infantry, with a design to fill up their Trenches : The Attack began at a quarter before six in the Evening, and continued 'till seven and three quarters, our Carabiniers attacked their right with the *Orleans* and Queen's Brigades, under the command of Count *Villemur*. The Brigades of *Auvergne*, and the King with 400 Dragoons on foot, commanded by the Count *Danois*, (the Duke of *Biron* serving in quality of Colonel of the King's Regiment) attack'd their left, and the Brigade of *Navarre*, under the command of Count *Berchiny*, attack'd the center. We marched directly to the Enemy's Trenches, where they stood till we came near enough, and then discharged at us above 8000 Muskets, but when they perceived the little effect of their fire, and that we after returning it, were falling on them with our Bayonets screwed on as in the former sally, they intirely abandoned their Trenches in spite of their Officers, who used all endeavours possible to stop them ; but as they crowded so greatly on each other, and that we enter'd their Trenches with extraordinary rapidity, it was impossible for vast Numbers of them to get out of the very Trenches, where the Slaughter was really dreadful during the first Moments of our Soldiers Fury, which was all executed by the Thrusts and Strokes of our Bayonets. Whilst we were

employ'd in levelling the Trenches, nailing ten Mortars and some Cannon they had left, and setting Fire to the Batteries on which they had yet no Artillery planted, Marshal *Broglie* sent a Detachment of Carabineers, Dragoons, and Infantry in Pursuit of the flying *Austrians*, who could by no Means be rallied 'till they join'd their Army, that was marching towards us in order of Battle, under the Command of Prince *Charles of Lorrain*, of which Marshal *Broglie* being inform'd, he ordered us to retreat, which we did in good Order along the Moat, without being incommoded by the *Austrian* Army, which followed us pretty closely, for they no sooner came under our Cannon, which was charged with Cartridge, than we fired on them with exceeding Success; and we could perceive them drop by twenties and thirties *per* Battalion and Squadron at every Cannon Shot, which soon oblig'd them to retire. We carried off two Pieces of Cannon, and five *Austrian* Colours. General *Monti*, their grand Engineer, with one Lieutenant Colonel, several Captains and Lieutenants, and 200 Soldiers, were made prisoners, and above 4000 of the enemy, and with them General *Wolfembutte*, were killed. We lost in this Action the Marquis *de Tefsè*, Brigadier, Colonel of the Queen's Regiment, the Marquis *de Clermont*, Colonel of the Regiment of *Auvergne*, the Marquis *Molac*, Colonel of the Regiment of *Berré*, several Lieutenant Colonels, Majors, Captains, Lieutenants, and above 300 Soldiers; and had 619 wounded, among whom are Major General the Duke of *Biron*, Colonel of the King's Regiment, and several other Officers, who are in a fair Way of Recovery.



Recovery. Marshal *Broglie* (at whose Elbow I was) declared to us, that no Battle could be of greater Consequence than that Sally.

Finding our two first Sallies succeed so well, we made a feint one on the 23d, with some Piquets. The Enemy, accustomed to have their Throats cut in their very Trenches, no sooner espied our Men than their whole Army was under Arms, and their Horse advanced in a grand Trot; but as soon as they came within Reach, and felt the Effect of our Artillery, which greatly galled them, they quickly retired, finding 'twas but a false Alarm. During the whole Siege we every Day made small Sallies with five or six Companies of Granadiers, who never fail'd of Success, in killing every Day several of the Enemy, taking many Prisoners, and levelling a good deal of their Works.

This Day we had a Suspension of Arms for three Hours, in order to bury the Dead.

The 24th we had the like for two Hours.

This whole Day the Enemy were employ'd in raising a Battery of thirty Pieces of Cannon, in order to batter in Breach, and destroy our Fortifications.

The 25th Marshal *Broglie* order'd near thirty Houses, in that Part called the *Little City*, to be pull'd down, lest the Enemy's Bombs should set them on fire.

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The 26th we found 400 Fufees, that were hid in one of these Houses by several particular Persons, who were sentenced to pay, in twenty-four Hours, 200,000 Florins, on pain of Death; which Sum was accordingly paid.

The 29th the Enemy began, at five in the Morning, to batter in Breach, and continued till four in the Evening.

This Day Marshal *Broglie* issued a Proclamation, ordering all the Inhabitants of the City to be at their respective Homes at six of the Clock every Evening, and not to go abroad before six in the Morning, under pain of Imprisonment and corporal Punishment; and he further commanded them to bring him all their Pewter and Lead, on pain of exemplary Punishment.

The 31st Marshal *Belle-Isle* received a Letter from Count *Koningsegg*, desiring an Interview with him on some Proposals he had to make towards an Accommodation, which Proposals were never made publick: The Marshal made Answer he would meet him at the Place appointed, on Condition, however, that Hostilities should not in the mean time be discontinued. And in truth the Artillery was never so briskly employ'd as on that Day by each Party.

The 1st of *September* all Preaching in Churches and Convents was forbid, because that a Preacher had the Day before in the Pulpit utter'd seditious Words.

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The 2d the ringing or tolling of Bells was forbidden, the Night between the 2d and 3d we were employed in raising in one of our Curtains, a Battery of twenty Pieces of Cannon, which flanked their grand Battery, in order by destroying their Carriages to dismount their Cannon: The Obscurity of the Night hindered the Enemy from seeing us at work, and the first Notice they had of it, was from the Mouth of our Cannon placed on that Battery, which obliged them to abandon the Breach, and all other Thoughts, but that of employing all their Fire against our said new built Battery, which sorely galled them: In short, we dismounted some of their Cannon, and they finding they could not resist us, drew them off in the Night, between the 3d and 4th, from which Time they batter'd no more in Breach.

The 3d and 4th we had some slight Skirmishes.

The 5th at Night we made a Sally with 1200 Men, who pushed back a Body of Dragoons, to their first parallel Line, that was advanced to within Musket-shot of the Tewn, we made on this Occasion Forty Prisoners, and besides the wounded, killed above Three-hundred Men, with the Loss of Three Men killed on our Side and Thirty wounded, *M. de Ratsky* died in the Trenches of an Apoplexy.

The Night between the 5th and 6th we made another Sally, with Three Companies of Granadiers, who attacked a Post occupied by the Regiment of *Mercy*, who would have infallibly been routed,



routed, were they not succoured by some Regiments of *Cuirassiers* : Our *Granadiers* return'd in good Order, after losing four Men and having six wounded.

The following Night, Marshal *Broglie* sallied with 1200 Men on a Body of *Austrians*, that was posted towards the Mountain of *St. Laurence*, of whom they took Two Officers and Twenty-one Soldiers Prisoners, and levelled most of their Works.

The 8th all Officers and Soldiers were forbid to make any more Prisoners.

The 9th before the Break of Day we sallied with Eight-hundred Men at the *Imperial Gate*, and destroy'd a good many of the Besiegers Works. *M. de Beaufobre* who commanded six Companies of *Grenadiers*, made use of a singular Stratagem, which however is deem'd lawful in War, that succeeded very well; he advanced unconcernedly towards a Body of the Enemy's Foot, and as he speaks perfectly well the high *Dutch*, when they cry'd out to him, *who comes there?* he answer'd, *a Friend*, and at the same Time approaches the commanding *Austrian* Officer saying : *The French are advancing towards our Left, command your Men to wheel about, I will order mine to do the same, and by this double Motion we will be either Masters of cutting them off, or making them all Prisoners.* The *Austrian* Officer without Reflection did not wait to be requested a second Time, but his Orders were scarce executed, when *M. Beaufobre* fell upon  
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their Backs with his Bayonets screwed on his Muskets, and that with such Expedition, that he had Time to kill a considerable Number of them, and afterwards to escape the Enemy's Army, which were drawn hither by the Firing; for they were every Night under Arms to prevent Surpizes from our Sallies.

From thence to the 12th we continued to make small Sallies, by which Means we still demolished their Works.

In the Night between the 12th and 13th, the *Austrian* Army raised the Siege of *Prague*, and demolished the Bridge they had over the lower *Moldaw*.

The 14th, they retired quite out of the view of the City, and Prince *Charles* of *Lorrain* left only 9000 Men at some Leagues distance to hinder us from receiving Provisions. This Day they began to ring their Bells, at half an hour past one in the Afternoon.

The 15th and 16th, The Enemy set several Villages on fire.

The 18th, M. d' *Appelgrehn*, Brigadier and Colonel of the Regiment of his name, dyed of his wounds.

The 19th, we seized on the Post of St. *Margaret*.

The 20th, We sent out three Detachments, the first of 1200 Men, including Horse and  
C Foot,

Foot, commanded by Marshal *Braglia*, which marched out at the Gate of the *Racoles*, with eight Pieces of Cannon to seize on a Village called *Liben*, distant about a League and a half from the City, in order to open a Communication; the enemy on our approach retired, and the passage being clear and open on that side, the Duke of *Brisac*, the Count of *Beauvean*, and the Prince of *Deuxponts*, marched off with an escort of 500 Men. The second Detachment consisting of the Regiment of *Piemont*, and 300 Carabineers, was commanded by M. de *Sandricour*, whose orders was to undertake nothing: However from eleven in the Morning 'till eight at Night, there passed several skirmishes between them and the enemy whom they often drew under the Cannon of the Town, that was charged with Cartridge, in order to do the greater Execution, and when they were forced thereby to retire, we in our turn pursued them. The third Detachment was of 800 Men, commanded by the Duke of *Luxemburg*, who seiz'd on the Star Park,

The 22d, The Marshal marched to *Rostock*, with five Brigades of Foot, and a Detachment of 800 Horse in order to attack the Bridge which the *Austrians* had there over the lower Moldaw, which the enemy on our approach, abandon'd and we pursued them above a League on the road to *Beraun*; the Chevalier *Courtin* made himself Master of the Bridge the enemy had built, at *Koningsfall*, on the upper Moldaw. The Regiments of *Navarre*, *Piemont*, *Anjou*, *Orleans*, and *Rochechouart* are now encamped under the command of the Marquis de la *Farre*, at a League's distance from *Prague*, near the Village of *Liben*; the

the Granediers and Horse are canton'd farther off in the Village of *Vischochzan* ; the *Sieur de la Valette*, Lieutenant Colonel of the Royal Regiment of Carabiniers took Possession of *Melnick* on the *Elbe*, where he made 25 Prisoners, and afterwards marched to post himself at *Leismeritz*. In the different Places of which we are become Masters, we found several Magazines which the enemy were forced to abandon, and among them, one of 25000 Cannon Balls, and 3000 Bombs.

We lost during the Siege, four Colonels, seventy Officers, and 800 Soldiers, and had about 1500 wounded, the loss of the enemy exceeds 15000 Men, including their wounded and Prisoners.

F I N I S.